

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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R 131016Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3362

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 0602

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OREP (MC GOVERN, GEORGE)

SUBJ: SENATOR MC GOVERN VISITS DELHI

SUMMARY: SENATOR MCGOVERN'S JAN 7-10 TRIP TO DELHI WAS ACTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE. THE SENATOR DISCUSSED A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS, INCLUDING INDO-US RELATIONS AND RECENT ANTI-CIA ALLEGATIONS, WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER HIGH RANKING GOI OFFICIALS. HE VISITED A RURAL VILLAGE IN THE PUNJAB AND PARTICIPATED IN A NUMBER OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND MEETINGS WITH THE PRESS, REITERATING THE US DESIRE FOR BETTER INDO-US RELATIONS, PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION AND HIS PREFERENCE FOR POLITICAL AND PRESS FREEDOMS. END SUMMARY.

1. SENATOR MCGOVERN'S JANUARY 7-10 SCHEDULE IN DELHI WAS PRESSING BUT PRODUCTIVE. ON CROSSING THE PAKISTAN BORDER, THE SENATOR AND HIS PARTY TRAVELLED TO A RURAL PUNJAB VILLAGE WHERE THEY MET VILLAGE LEADERS AND REVIEWED FIRST HAND THE OPERATION OF THE TITLE II SCHOOL LUNCH FEEDING PROGRAM WHICH THE SENATOR HIMSELF INAUGURATED IN THE SAME STATE 14 YEARS AGO ALN HE WAS FOOD FOR GEACE DIRECTOR. IN DELHI, THE SENATOR MET WITH PRIME MINISTER GANDHI FOR OVER AN HOUR. HE MET SEPAR-

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ATELY WITH THE TWO SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN CABINET:

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION MINISTER RAM AND FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN. HE MET A WIDE RANGE OF GOI OFFICIALS, POLITICIANS, YOUTH LEADERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC PRESS AT A SERIES OF LUNCHEES, DINNERS AND MEETINGS WITH JOURNALISTS.

2. IN HIS MEETINGS WITH SENIOR GOI OFFICIALS (REPORTED SEPTELS), PRESS REPRESENTATIVES, GOI OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS, SENATOR MCGOVERN SOUNDED OUT REACTIONS TO THE EMERGENCY AND ATTENDANT RESTRICTIONS, AND, WHEN ASKED, REGISTERED HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT HE COULD NOT ENDORSE RESTRICTIONS OF POLITICAL AND PRESS FREEDOMS. (HIS COMMENTS TO THE PRESS IN THIS VEIN WERE NOT REPORTED IN THE INDIAN PRESS.) ALL INDIAN OFFICIALS HE MET STRONGLY DEFENDED THE EMERGENCY.

3. SENATOR MCGOVERN PRESISTENTLY PROBED TOP INDIAN OFFICIALS ABOUT THE SOURCE OF THEIR PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN REGARDING CIA ACTIVITIES IN INDIA. BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND CHAVAN NOTED THAT THE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE CHARGES WAS "INFERENTIAL" OR "CIRCUMSTANTIAL," (TRANSCRIPTS OF BOTH CONVERSATIONS HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO NEA/INS). SENATOR MCGOVERN'S STATEMENT IN PAKISTAN THAT THE US DESIRED TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA WAS GIVEN PLAY IN INDIA'S CENSORED PRESS. (HIS REFERENCES TO INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM WERE NOT.) HE REITERATED THIS VIEW TO TOP INDIAN OFFICIALS AND IN PRESS CONFERENCES, STRESSING THAT THE APPARENT BOSTACLES TO IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS SEEMED SMALL. ON PAKISTAN, THE SENATOR OBSERVED THAT IT SEEMED IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. HE STRESSED THAT US SAW PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE REGION AS HELPFUL TO OVERALL PROGRESS.

4. THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT PROVIDED VIP TREATMENT TO SENATOR MCGOVERN AND HIS PARTY. AN AIR FORCE PLANE WAS PROVIDED FOR AN AFTERNOON TRIP TO AGRA AND THE TAJ. THE FOREIGN MINISTER HOSTED A DINNER. GOVERN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENT OSCUCIALS AND MPS PROMPTLY ACCEPTED INVITATIONS AND PARTICIPATED IN THE ROUND OF MEALS AND FUNCTIONS CONNECTED WITH THE VISIT.
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